

Communion of Western Orthodox Churches

'The Celtic Orthodox Church', 'The French Orthodox Church' and 'The Orthodox Church of the Gauls', obedient to the call of the Holy Spirit, and trusting in the promise of God: *I will give them one heart and I will put in them a new spirit* (Ez 11:19), found the Communion of Western Orthodox Churches.

At the heart of this Communion, our respective spiritual heritages are recognised and accomplished in the image of the Holy Trinity, in which the Persons are united without confusion and distinct without separation. To this end, our Churches engage in a conversation of the heart and a return to the purity of the Gospel life of the faith of our Fathers.

The Communion of Western Orthodox Churches is an integral part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, founded by our Lord Jesus Christ. By the grace and mercy of God, our Churches are heirs, through an uninterrupted line, of the historic Churches which resulted from the preaching of the apostles and disciples of Christ in the West.

The Communion of Western Orthodox Churches confesses the faith of the first three Ecumenical Councils, recognised by all Christians, and accepts the dogmatic declarations of the following Four Great Councils, but not accepting from them certain anathemas and canons which carry exclusions, separations and divisions. The Communion adheres fully to the doctrinal agreements following from the ecumenical dialogue between the Orthodox Churches and other Christian Confessions.

Our Churches embody and perpetuate the Orthodox Tradition that the fathers and saints founded through the Holy Spirit, in the West, in the peoples and cultures which characterise them; as it is written, *Go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.* (Mt. 28:19)

Each of our Churches expresses, by its rites and customs, aspects of this Tradition bringing them up to date, faithful to the call which she has received from God, so that the fullness of the faith and the apostolic kerygma are profoundly entrenched in the history and call of this people. This is why, this Communion is open to other Western Orthodox Churches alive with the same spirit.

We hope that our Churches become a humble place of welcome, of reconciliation, of pardon and charity in Christ, that our actions and our liturgical life be a living testimony to the absolute love of God for all people and for all creation.

We entrust this beginning to the intercession of the Most Holy Mother of God and all the Saints. May God keep us in His mercy. To Him be all honour and glory, to the ages of ages. Amen.

The Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The 25th December 2007.

Celtic Orthodox Church
Bishop Mael & Bishop Marc

French Orthodox Church
Bishop Vigile & Bishop Martin

Orthodox Church of the Gauls
Bishop Gregoire